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The Christian Reflector.

J. W. OLMSTEAD, Editor.
H. A. GRAVES, Cor. Editor.

Vol. 10.

BOSTON, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1847.

No. 51.

Publishers: WM. S. DAMRELL,
HENRY UPHAM.

Christian Reflector.

OFFICE, NO. 62 WASHINGTON STREET, BOSTON.
FOR THE CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR.

The Representative Principle again.

A SIGN OF THE TIMES.

The New York Recorder, of Nov. 17, re- marks that the Presbyterian Herald finds a sign of the times looking toward Presbyteri- anism, in the demand which is made for the representation of the churches in the Mission- ary Union. He says, "the fact that corre- spondents urge these demands, shows that there is felt to be a want in the congregational form of government which has yet to be supplied."

Now, Messrs. Editors, the above is indeed coming conscious of a defect in the congrega- tional form of church government, but rather than our Free Mission brethren, from what they have said about the 'representative prin- ciple' are understood by others as becoming tired of the old Baptist platform, and that they, in talk, at least, are verging toward Presbyterianism. I apprehend, however, that a strong desire to make out a case, and to find occasion against the Missionary Union, has led them to speak in the confused and unguarded manner they have, and to utter things which they would otherwise condemn. Whether this is the case, or whether, in reality, they would infringe the representative principle upon the Baptist denomination, re- mains to be seen, when the fog which now seems to envelop them shall have blown off a little. Be that as it may, their language fully warrants the conclusions of our Presbyterian friends of the Herald. The Missionary Union has been charged by them with denying, or setting aside, the representative principle as recognized by the denomination. The cry which has been raised, that the rights of the churches have been invaded, has aroused and bewildered the minds of some, and tended to 'sow discord among brethren,' and has, no doubt, somewhat impeded the operations of that society. Passing, for the present, at least, other complaints which our Free Mis- sion brethren have preferred against that body, I will, in this conference my remarks to that one complaint. I would, however, that in their communications upon this subject, they would be more definite. That they ad- vocate the representative principle as an ele- ment of church order is obvious, but that they mean to do so is not so certain.* Whether I understand them or not, I will try myself to be understood, in the remarks I have to offer upon the subject.

I mean, then, to say that Baptist churches are distinct and independent bodies,—that each church is possessed of functions and powers adequate to the disposal of all matters pertaining to the church, its discipline, or its fellowship; and that these functions are exer- cised on principles of pure democracy, and are not transferable,—that each church is not subject to Christ for the retaining and re- ceiving of these functions. She can in no wise transfer them. In their exercise, the church can have no representative. She may, indeed, appoint an agent, or servant, to perform what she decides and directs. But she can never, through a representative, merge her powers or functions in another body. Nor can she innocently be subject to any such professedly concentrated power of the churches. And any such body, call it what you may, presbytery, synod, council, or association, that claims in itself any such representative or concentrated power of the churches, or attempts to exercise any such power in the name and behalf of the church- es, involves the element of all that is obnoxious to the independence and freedom of the churches in Presbyterianism, Episcopacy, or even Popery. All these organizations, with their giant power for mischief, found their origin in the 'church representative prin- ciple,'—in this supposed right of churches to transfer their functions to another, or, in other words, to be represented in other bodies.

If, therefore, the 'representative principle' be regarded by any as a right belonging to, or to be exercised by, the churches of the Baptist denomination, it is, I am quite sure, of recent origin, and of very limited extent. As Baptists, we have ever clung with tenacity to the primitive order of the churches as established by the apostles. We have studiously guarded against change or innovation, and its date be this side the day of inspiration. Did the apostles obtain in the days of the apostles? is a question, the decision of which, with all Baptists, will decide its pres- ence.

*Whether those who would guard the representative principle, as a means of preserving the democracy of the church, are not, in fact, advocating the 'representative principle,' wherever it defines his 'representative,' reduces him to a mere mes- senger, or agent; that, in effect, shrouding the representa- tive principle. He seems not to be aware that a representa- tive is not a mere messenger, but a 'substitute in power.' He is not a mere messenger, but a 'substitute in power.' He is not a mere messenger, but a 'substitute in power.'

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ent claim to be regarded as an element in the form of our church government. It seems to me, that all who advocate it, to be consistent Baptists, should first show that it was recognized by the apostles, or by the primitive churches. But its advocates, I be- lieve, have made no such effort. And if they should, they would appeal both to Bible and history in vain. While such a principle is not once named in the Bible, or a single fact mentioned which would indicate the recognition of the 'representative principle' in the primitive churches, much is said to show that it did not exist, and was not recognized by Christ or his apostles. The law of disci- pline, as given by Christ himself, in the 15th of Matthew, recognizes the church as the highest and only tribunal of appeal in mat- ters of discipline. Each church, in all the epistles, is addressed as an independent body, and is recognized as such. The church is not in them the power to try even those who claimed to be apostles. And in all the apostolic charges and addresses, no representa- tive body, in any form, is even alluded to. And history is equally unpropitious to the defenders of the 'representative principle.' Says Mosheim, (and being an Episcopalian, he would not like to say it, did not truth compel him):

"Nothing, on the contrary, is more evident than the perfect equality that reigned among the primitive churches; nor does there ap- pear, in this first century, the smallest trace of that association of provincial churches from which councils and metropolitans derive their origin. It was only in the second cen- tury, that the custom of holding councils commenced in Greece, whence it soon spread through the other provinces."

The same historian further informs us, that this representative principle soon re- sulted in the election of a new order of ecclesi- astics throughout Christendom, 'heads of the church,' and finally, of the bishopric of Rome, and the establishment of Popery it- self.

The date of the origin of the representative principle is too late by nearly two centuries, and too ruinous in its experiment, to entitle it to any thing but utter rejection among the Baptists. Nor do they feel that 'there is any want in the congregational form of government, yet to be supplied.' They are fully convinced that Christ has anticipated and provided for all the wants of his churches in the order which, under the direction of inspiration, he has established. And in saying this, I have no doubt I speak the senti- ments of more than ninety-nine hundredths of the Baptists in the United States.

But the advocates of the representative principle seem to suppose that the Baptists recognize it in their views and practice in regard to councils and associations. That a few of the unenlightened or mis- guided, or perhaps, slightly deranged, combi- nations of these gentlemen. The legal journals of the day reported the issue of the process, to which Sir Collyer Eardley alludes in the following paragraph of a letter to the con- ductors of the London Evangelical Christen- dom:—You will probably have seen in sev- eral periodicals, the denial by the French Papist, of the blasphemous prayer to the Virgin, which I have quoted at several Alli- ance meetings. At Brussels, I ascertained beyond all doubt, that it was procured in 1842 or 1843, by a Catholic printer-seller, from the Catholic publisher in Paris, whose name I bear. I will not trouble you with details. It is enough to say that the blasphemous prayer, which I have quoted, was printed in his establishment, and that the printer who denied my statement, is by a most remarkable providence, committed to prison, and his printer fined five thousand francs, for suppressing the name of the printer in another similar case. The ink was scarcely dry, with which he had written to Scotland and Newcastle, to deny that the prayer was printed in his establishment, when the Correctional Police of Paris, without any concert with our brethren, as far as I am aware, demonstrates to the world, by a severe punishment of the culprits, that that establish- ment is in the habit of publishing similar articles, and illegally evading the responsi- bility.

The *Voix Nouvelle*, from which the materials of the foregoing condensed account have been mainly derived, contains, in the number for May 19, another remarkable in- stance of the grossness of the impostures which Popery still practices, wherever it finds a congenial soil. It consists of a scrupu- lously accurate copy of a prayer to 'the good God, and the holy good Virgin,' which has been distributed, if not with the approbation of the clergy, at least without their opposi- tion, in a certain district on the banks of the Garonne. Its length, however, and I may add, its preposterous absurdity, preclude its insertion here. The single, well-authen- ticated fact which has already been presented, is probably sufficient to expose the nature of some of the means employed for the propa- gation of Romanism in France.

The extent to which gross superstition, and the most puerile practices are still pre- valent in this enlightened country, would be incredible, were it not for the testimony of personal observation, and even of Roman Catholic publications. The revival of mir- acles is a striking feature in the present sys- tem of tactics adopted by the French priest- hood. The Catholic Almanac, and other Popish periodicals, are filled with accounts of 'new miracles.' A Parisian journal hav- ing expressed its surprise on the subject of three of these, which had been vouched for by the Ultramontane papers, the *Univers Re- ligieux* exclaimed in reply, 'three miracles! but we had thirty miracles in 1846! We put down thirty only, that we may not frigh-

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Genin, upon the 'diversity ques- tion,' (the source of so much confusion in the world,) shows conclusively how little the sanction and even active encouragement which they receive from the clergy, entitles that body to claim control over the interests of national education. This work is not now in my possession, but several of the following passages from the writer, to whom reference has been lately made. 'If I were to relate all the facts of this kind, which come to my knowledge, I could easily write some thick volumes on the subject. In truth, it is Pagan idolatry, disguised under Chris- tian forms. *Normandy* in particular, is still infected with these absurd opinions and practices. There are numerous places of pilgrimage. Every day is marked by the miracles of some saint and the peasants blind- ly adopt all these extravagances. In the little town of *Feamp*, there is a fountain, the water of which does wonders—thousands of pilgrims annually resort to it from the surrounding country. The *caré* distributes to each a bottle of this water, accompanying it with some Latin words, and receives two sous for his trouble. This amounts to a considerable sum. In another town, *Andelys*, there is also a fountain, which possesses, once in a year, the sovereign virtue of curing rheumatism, palsy, and nervous affections. The pilgrims either plunge the diseased member into the water, or throw themselves entirely, and afterwards follow the procession in their wet clothes. In another place, a saint called *Ouphre* has the reputation of curing the lame, the maimed, and those afflicted with maladies of a similar kind. 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Another production published at Nancy, is a Letter from Jesus Christ him- self, which appears to have been found in the country, by a devout peasant. Only a few weeks ago, a report spread in the city of Lyons, that unaccountable scenes had taken place in a boarding school of young girls, kept by nuns. These young girls declared that the devil had appeared to them in the convent, that he came at night, and threat- ened them; and they showed their hands pierced with nails, the marks of ropes on their necks, and other signs which proved that these appearances of Satan were not al- together vain dreams. But their parents and friends suspected in all this, some scheme of deception. The public voice immediately ascribed it to the priests, affirming that 'they alone are capable of these infernal stratagems.' The streets resounded with the cries of Down with the priests! Down with the Jesuits! Down with the convents! The civil and military authorities interfered, to prevent the populace from demolishing the house in which the mysterious occurrences had taken place. The magistrates, how- ever, ordered the establishment to be shut up, and instituted an investigation, the results of which have not yet been disclosed. The Lady Superior and other nuns have been thrown into prison, and a Popish ecclesiast- ic is said to be involved in the dark affair. The journals of Lyons remark, that 'since the police have kept watch, the devil has ceased to make his appearance.' Thus, in this recent case, as well as in that of the *Mater Noter*, the designs of superstition have been baffled.

Truly yours, NATHANIEL COLVER.

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ITS RELIGIOUS CONDITION.—No. VII.

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TO MARY.
Our Mother, who art in heaven, O Mary, may your name be blessed forever. May your love come to all hearts. May your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us this day grace and mercy; give us the pardon of our faults, as we hope for it from your goodness without bounds, and leave us not to fall under temptation, but deliver us from evil, Amen.

A copy of this precious document having been made public, last spring, in Great Brit- ain, naturally excited considerable attention, and led to an emphatic disclaimer on the part of Alcan and Co., who denounced it as 'absurd, a piece, every word of which is a heresy,' and explicitly asserted that, in their belief, it was fabricated by 'our separated brethren, who are guilty of counterfeiting our signature.' The letter, in which these expressions occur, concludes by saying: 'We are not the authors of this prayer, and we do not hesitate to affirm that it is the work of Protestants.' I remember the excitement oc- casioned in certain circles at Paris, by these transactions. In the temporary absence of the Archbishop of Paris, his first Grand Vicar summoned the print-sellers, 'to come and bear witness to the truth,'—to use their own words. The consequence was, that they publicly declared their intention of 'prosecut- ing vigorously the framers of this odious calumny, whoever they may be.' 'In fact,' says the *Voix Nouvelle*, 'they were preparing for us a little suit at law; when, behold, the Court of Correctional Police came to the aid, and condemning Alcan and Co., to im- prisonment and a reparation, for the claus- ternal and blasphemous character of these gentlemen.' The legal journals of the day reported the issue of the process, to which Sir Collyer Eardley alludes in the following paragraph of a letter to the con- ductors of the London Evangelical Christen- dom:—You will probably have seen in sev- eral periodicals, the denial by the French Papist, of the blasphemous prayer to the Virgin, which I have quoted at several Alli- ance meetings. At Brussels, I ascertained beyond all doubt, that it was procured in 1842 or 1843, by a Catholic printer-seller, from the Catholic publisher in Paris, whose name I bear. I will not trouble you with details. It is enough to say that the blasphemous prayer, which I have quoted, was printed in his establishment, and that the printer who denied my statement, is by a most remarkable providence, committed to prison, and his printer fined five thousand francs, for suppressing the name of the printer in another similar case. The ink was scarcely dry, with which he had written to Scotland and Newcastle, to deny that the prayer was printed in his establishment, when the Correctional Police of Paris, without any concert with our brethren, as far as I am aware, demonstrates to the world, by a severe punishment of the culprits, that that establish- ment is in the habit of publishing similar articles, and illegally evading the responsi- bility.

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On the 29th of April, 1847, Edmond Ver- rue purchased, at the request of the editor of *La Voix Nouvelle*, a leading Protestant jour- nal in Paris, the following parody on the Lord's Prayer. It was selected at the fa- vorite Catholic house of Alcan and Co., au *Saint Cœur de Marie*, the Sacred Heart of Mary, where a large collection of similar parodies, and a letter from Jesus Christ, and the Heart of Jesus. My readers must be content with a bare translation of this *Mater Noter*, without that display of black letter, and illuminated capitals, which, in the original, might have fascinated an Oxford tumbler.

TO MARY.
Our Mother, who art in heaven, O Mary, may your name be blessed forever. May your love come to all hearts. May your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us this day grace and mercy; give us the pardon of our faults, as we hope for it from your goodness without bounds, and leave us not to fall under temptation, but deliver us from evil, Amen.

A copy of this precious document having been made public, last spring, in Great Brit- ain, naturally excited considerable attention, and led to an emphatic disclaimer on the part of Alcan and Co., who denounced it as 'absurd, a piece, every word of which is a heresy,' and explicitly asserted that, in their belief, it was fabricated by 'our separated brethren, who are guilty of counterfeiting our signature.' The letter, in which these expressions occur, concludes by saying: 'We are not the authors of this prayer, and we do not hesitate to affirm that it is the work of Protestants.' I remember the excitement oc- casioned in certain circles at Paris, by these transactions. In the temporary absence of the Archbishop of Paris, his first Grand Vicar summoned the print-sellers, 'to come and bear witness to the truth,'—to use their own words. The consequence was, that they publicly declared their intention of 'prosecut- ing vigorously the framers of this odious calumny, whoever they may be.' 'In fact,' says the *Voix Nouvelle*, 'they were preparing for us a little suit at law; when, behold, the Court of Correctional Police came to the aid, and condemning Alcan and Co., to im- prisonment and a reparation, for the claus- ternal and blasphemous character of these gentlemen.' The legal journals of the day reported the issue of the process, to which Sir Collyer Eardley alludes in the following paragraph of a letter to the con- ductors of the London Evangelical Christen- dom:—You will probably have seen in sev- eral periodicals, the denial by the French Papist, of the blasphemous prayer to the Virgin, which I have quoted at several Alli- Alliance meetings. At Brussels, I ascertained beyond all doubt, that it was procured in 1842 or 1843, by a Catholic printer-seller, from the Catholic publisher in Paris, whose name I bear. I will not trouble you with details. It is enough to say that the blasphemous prayer, which I have quoted, was printed in his establishment, and that the printer who denied my statement, is by a most remarkable providence, committed to prison, and his printer fined five thousand francs, for suppressing the name of the printer in another similar case. The ink was scarcely dry, with which he had written to Scotland and Newcastle, to deny that the prayer was printed in his establishment, when the Correctional Police of Paris, without

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